



## U.S. government report says fluoride at twice the recommended limit is linked to lower IQ in kids

By MIKE STOBBE  
AP Medical Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — A U.S. government report expected to stir debate concluded that fluoride in drinking water at twice the recommended limit is linked with lower IQ in children.

The report, based on an analyses of previously published research, marks the first time a federal agency has determined — "with moderate confidence" — that there is a link between higher levels of fluoride exposure and lower IQ in kids. While the report was not designed to evaluate the health effects of fluoride in drinking water alone, it is a striking acknowledgment of a potential neurological risk from high levels of fluoride.

Fluoride strengthens teeth and reduces cavities by replacing minerals lost during normal wear and tear, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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Water flows from a water fountain in Concord, N.H., on Friday, Jan. 7, 2011.

Associated Press



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Continued from Front

The addition of low levels of fluoride to drinking water has long been considered one of the greatest public health achievements of the last century.

"I think this (report) is crucial in our understanding" of this risk, said Ashley Malin, a University of Florida researcher who has studied the affect of higher fluoride levels in pregnant women on their children. She called it the most rigorously conducted report of its kind.

The long-awaited report released Wednesday comes from the National Toxicology Program, part of the Department of Health and Human Services. It summarizes a review of studies, conducted in Canada, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, and Mexico, that concludes that drinking water containing more than 1.5 milligrams of fluoride per liter is consistently associated with lower IQs in kids.

The report did not try to quantify exactly how many IQ points might be lost at different levels of fluoride exposure. But some of the studies reviewed in the report suggested IQ was 2 to 5 points lower in children who'd had higher exposures.

Since 2015, federal health officials have recommend-



A child rinses a toothbrush in San Francisco on June 18, 2019. Associated Press

ed a fluoridation level of 0.7 milligrams per liter of water, and for five decades before the recommended upper range was 1.2. The World Health Organization has set a safe limit for fluoride in drinking water of 1.5. The report said that about 0.6% of the U.S. population — about 1.9 million people — are on water systems with naturally occurring fluoride levels of 1.5 milligrams or higher.

"The findings from this report raise the questions about how these people can be protected and what makes the most sense," Malin said. The 324-page report did not reach a conclusion about the risks of lower levels of fluoride, saying more study is needed. It also did not answer what high levels of fluoride might do to adults. The American Dental As-

sociation, which champions water fluoridation, had been critical of earlier versions of the new analysis and Malin's research. Asked for comment, a spokeswoman late Wednesday afternoon emailed that the organization's experts were still reviewing the report.

Fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in water and soil. About 80 years ago, scientists discovered that people whose supplies naturally had more fluoride also had fewer cavities, triggering a push to get more Americans to use fluoride for better dental health.

In 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan became the first U.S. city to start adding fluoride to tap water. In 1950, federal officials endorsed water fluoridation to prevent tooth decay, and continued to promote

it even after fluoride toothpaste brands hit the market several years later. Though fluoride can come from a number of sources, drinking water is the main source for Americans, researchers say. Officials lowered their recommendation for drinking water fluoride levels in 2015 to address a tooth condition called fluorosis, that can cause splotches on teeth and was becoming more common in U.S. kids. Separately, the Environmental Protection Agency has maintained a long-standing requirement that water systems cannot have more than 4 milligrams of fluoride per liter. That standard is designed to prevent skeletal fluorosis, a potentially crippling disorder which causes weaker bones, stiffness and pain. But more and more studies have increasingly pointed to a different problem, suggesting a link between higher levels of fluoride and brain development. Researchers wondered about the impact on developing fetuses and very young children who might ingest water with baby formula. Studies in animals showed fluoride could impact neurochemistry cell function in brain regions responsible for learning, memory, executive function and behavior. In 2006, the National Re-

search Council, a private nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C., said limited evidence from China pointed to neurological effects in people exposed to high levels of fluoride. It called for more research into the effect of fluoride on intelligence.

After more research continued to raise questions, the National Toxicology Program in 2016 started working on a review of the available studies that could provide guidance on whether new fluoride-limiting measures were needed.

There were earlier drafts but the final document has repeatedly been held up. At one point, a committee of experts said available research did not support an earlier draft's conclusions.

"Since fluoride is such an important topic to the public and to public health officials, it was imperative that we made every effort to get the science right," said Rick Woychik, director of the National Toxicology Program, in a statement.

Malin said it makes sense for pregnant women to lower their fluoride intake, not only from water but also from certain types of tea. It might also make sense to have policy discussions about whether to require fluoride-content on beverage labels, she said. □



Ohio Secretary of State and Republican candidate for U.S. Senate Frank LaRose speaks to supporters during a campaign event in Hamilton, Ohio, Monday, March 18, 2024.

Associated Press

By JULIE CARR SMYTH  
Associated Press  
COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Ohio's elections chief on

Wednesday referred for possible prosecution 597 apparent noncitizens who either registered to vote or

## Ohio identifies 597 noncitizens who voted or registered in recent elections

cast a ballot in a recent election — a higher number than he normally finds but still a tiny fraction of the state's electorate.

Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose said that of those cases, 138 were found to have cast ballots and 459 registered but did not vote. They were identified as part of a routine review and referred to Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost. The total compares to 148 noncitizen cases referred in 2022, 117 in 2021 and 354 in 2019. More than 8 million people are registered to vote

in Ohio. Only a handful of noncitizen-related cases are ever prosecuted. However, this year's referrals come as preventing noncitizen voting has become a centerpiece of Republicans' 2024 campaign messaging.

Earlier this year, LaRose launched an audit of the state's voter registration database that resulted in the removal of 154,995 registrations that he said had been confirmed to be abandoned and inactive for at least four consecutive years.

Civil rights organizations decried the effort as voter

suppression. LaRose said the effort is ongoing and additional registrations could yet be cancelled before November's presidential election.

LaRose has said his citizenship verification efforts this year are the most comprehensive the office has ever undertaken. The analysis includes cross-checks against records provided by the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Homeland Security's federal database of noncitizens, the Social Security Administration, federal jury pool data and other resources. □



# RFK Jr. to speak Friday amid speculation he'll drop independent presidential bid and support Trump

By JONATHAN J. COOPER  
and ALI SWENSON  
Associated Press

**PHOENIX (AP)** — Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. will speak Friday “about the present historical moment and his path forward,” his campaign announced Wednesday, fueling growing speculation that Kennedy could drop out and support Republican nominee Donald Trump. Kennedy’s running mate openly discussed the possibility on a podcast this week, saying the campaign was considering a move to “join forces” with Trump to limit the election chance of Kamala Harris, whose Democratic convention winds up Thursday night in Chicago. The move would have once seemed unthinkable for Kennedy, a Democrat for most of his life and — as the nephew of President John F. Kennedy and the son of Robert F. Kennedy — a member of a beloved



Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr., waves to the media outside the Nassau County Supreme Court in Mineola, N.Y. on Wednesday, Aug., 21, 2024.

Democratic dynasty. Last month, during the Republican National Convention, Kennedy’s son posted and then quickly deleted a video showing a phone call between Kennedy and Trump, in which the former president appeared to try to talk Kennedy into siding with him.

Kennedy will give a speech in Phoenix, hours before Trump is scheduled to hold a rally in neighboring Glendale. A spokesperson for Kennedy, Stefanie Spear, declined to say whether he planned to drop out or why he chose Arizona for his speech. Trump and Kennedy have

been in regular contact in recent weeks, including a meeting in Milwaukee as Republicans gathered for their national convention last month. He told CNN Tuesday that he would “love” an endorsement from the independent candidate, whom he called a “brilliant guy.”

He also said he would “certainly” be open to Kennedy playing a role in his administration if Kennedy drops out and endorses him instead. “He’s a very smart guy. I’ve known him for a very long time,” Trump told the network. “I didn’t know he was thinking about getting out, but if he is thinking about getting out, certainly I’d be open to it.” Trump, who had previously railed against Kennedy as “the most radical left candidate in the race,” was also asked by CNN if he would consider appointing Kennedy to a role in his administration if he wins in November. “I like him a lot. I respect him a lot,” Trump said. “I probably would, if something like that would happen. He’s a very different kind of a guy — a very smart guy. And, yeah, I would be honored by that endorsement, certainly.” that challenges the signatures collected by his campaign. □

Associated Press

## Company that sent AI calls mimicking Joe Biden to New Hampshire voters agrees to pay \$1 million fine

By NICK PERRY  
Associated Press

**MERIDITH, N.H. (AP)** — A company that sent deceptive calls to New Hampshire voters using artificial intelligence to mimic President Joe Biden’s voice agreed Wednesday to pay a \$1 million fine, federal regulators said. Lingo Telecom, the voice service provider that transmitted the robocalls, agreed to the settlement to resolve enforcement action taken by the Federal Communications Commission, which had initially sought a \$2 million fine. The case is seen by many as an unsettling early example of how AI might be used to influence groups of voters and democracy as a whole. Meanwhile Steve Kramer, a political consultant who orchestrated the calls, still

faces a proposed \$6 million FCC fine as well as state criminal charges. The phone messages were sent to thousands of New Hampshire voters on Jan. 21. They featured a voice similar to Biden’s falsely suggesting that voting in the state’s presidential primary would preclude them from casting ballots in the November general election. Kramer, who paid a magician and self-described “digital nomad” to create the recording, told The Associated Press earlier this year that he wasn’t trying to influence the outcome of the primary, but he rather wanted to highlight the potential dangers of AI and spur lawmakers into action. If found guilty, Kramer could face a prison sentence of up to seven years on a charge of voter suppression and a sentence of

up to one year on a charge of impersonating a candidate. The FCC said that as well as agreeing to the civil fine, Lingo Telecom had agreed to strict caller ID authentication rules and requirements and to more thoroughly verify the accuracy of the information provided by its customers and upstream providers. “Every one of us deserves to know that the voice on the line is exactly who they claim to be,” FCC chairperson Jessica Rosenworcel said in a statement. “If AI is being used, that should be made clear to any consumer, citizen, and voter who encounters it. The FCC will act when trust in our communications networks is on the line.” Lingo Telecom did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The



Steve Kramer is seated Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at Superior Court, in Laconia, N.H., during his arraignment in connection with charges of voter suppression and impersonating a candidate.

Associated Press

company had earlier said it strongly disagreed with the FCC’s action, calling it an attempt to impose new rules retroactively. Nonprofit consumer advocacy group Public Citizen commended the FCC on its action. Co-president Robert Weissman said Rosenworcel got it “exactly

right” by saying consumers have a right to know when they are receiving authentic content and when they are receiving AI-generated deepfakes. Weissman said the case illustrates how such deepfakes pose “an existential threat to our democracy.” □



# Heat dome moves into Texas with record highs expected

By **KEN MILLER and NADIA LATHAN**  
**Associated Press**

**AUSTIN, Texas (AP)** — A heat dome that has led to nearly 90 consecutive days of triple-digit temperatures in Phoenix moved into Texas Wednesday, with record highs expected to fall by the weekend, according to the National Weather Service. Meanwhile, energy demand in Texas hit an unofficial all-time high Tuesday, according to data from the state's grid operator.

A major heat alert is in place for Texas, reflecting what the weather service called "rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with little to no overnight relief." An extreme heat alert was issued for eastern New Mexico.

A heat dome is a slow moving, upper-level high pressure system of stable air and a deep layer of high temperatures, meteorologist Bryan Jackson said.

"It is usually sunny, the sun is beating down, it is hot and the air is contained there," Jackson said. "There are dozen or so sites that are setting daily records ... mostly over Texas." Record high temperatures were expected in



**Tubers float the cool Comal River as temperatures in South Texas hit triple-digit numbers, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2024, in New Braunfels, Texas.**

cities such as Corpus Christi, San Antonio and Amarillo. In Phoenix, monsoon rains have provided brief respites since Sunday, although daytime highs continue to top 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius).

The dome was expected to move into western Oklahoma and eastern New Mexico beginning Saturday, then into the mid-Mississippi Valley, where it was forecast to weaken slightly, Jackson

said.

About 14.7 million people are under an excessive heat warning, with heat indexes expected at 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3 degrees Celsius) and above. Another 10 million people were under a heat advisory.

There were 38 heat-related deaths in Texas from January through July, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services, and hundreds have already

sought emergency care, according to MedStar ambulance in Fort Worth, Texas. The service responded to 286 heat-related calls during the first 20 days of August, about 14 per day, compared to about 11 per day in August 2023, according to public information officer Desiree Partain.

Austin-Travis County EMS Capt. Christa Stedman said calls about heat-related illness in the area around the

**Associated Press**

Texas state Capitol since April 1 are up by about one per day compared with a year ago, though July was somewhat milder this year.

"The vast majority of what we see is heat exhaustion, which is good because we catch it before it's heat stroke, but it's bad because people are not listening to the red flags," such as heat cramps in the arms, legs or stomach warning that the body is becoming too hot, Stedman said. Despite the record heat in Texas, residents haven't been asked to cut back on their energy use like in years prior. This contrasts with the 11 conservation notices issued last year.

One reason is that the agency, which manages Texas' independent energy grid and deregulated providers, has improved the grid's capabilities with the addition of more than 15 gigawatts of power supply since last summer. Although the agency has gotten better at controlling the demands of the grid, their criteria for when to notify residents to conserve energy has also changed, Doug Lewin, an energy consultant and president of Stoic Energy said. □

## Florida quietly removes LGBTQ+ travel info from state website

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP)** — Key West, Fort Lauderdale, Wilton Manors and St. Petersburg are among several Florida cities that have long been top U.S. destinations for LGBTQ+ tourists. So it came as a surprise this week when travelers learned that Florida's tourism marketing agency quietly removed the "LGBTQ Travel" section from its website sometime in the past few months.

Business owners who cater to Florida's LGBTQ+ tourists said Wednesday that it marked the latest attempt by officials in the state to erase the LGBTQ+ community. Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis previously championed a bill to forbid classroom instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity, and supported a ban on gender-affirming care for minors, as well as a law meant to keep children out of drag shows.

"It's just disgusting to see this," said Keith Blackburn, who heads the Greater Fort Lauderdale LGBT Chamber of Commerce. "They seem to want to erase us."

The change to Visit Florida's website was first reported by NBC News, which noted a search query still pulls up some listings for LGBTQ+-

friendly places despite the elimination of the section. John Lai, who chairs Visit Florida's board, didn't respond to an email seeking comment Tuesday. Dana Young, Visit Florida's CEO and president, didn't respond to a voicemail message Wednesday, and neither did the agency's public

relations director.

Visit Florida is a public-private partnership between the state of Florida and the state's tourism industry. The state contributes about \$50 million each year to the quasi-public agency from two tourism and economic development funds.

Florida is one of the most popular states in the U.S. for tourists, and tourism is one of its biggest industries. Nearly 141 million tourists visited Florida in 2023, with out-of-state visitors contributing more than \$102 billion to Florida's economy.

Before the change, the LGBTQ+ section on Visit Florida's website had read, "There's a sense of freedom to Florida's beaches, the warm weather and the myriad activities a draw for people of all orientations, but especially appealing to a gay community looking for a sense of belonging

and acceptance."

Blackburn said the change and other anti-LGBTQ+ policies out of Tallahassee make it more difficult for him to promote South Florida tourism since he encounters prospective travelers or travel promoters who say they don't want to do business in the state.

Last year, for instance, several civil rights groups issued a travel advisory for Florida, saying that policies championed by DeSantis and Florida lawmakers are "openly hostile toward African Americans, people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals."

But visitors should also understand that many Florida cities are extremely inclusive, with gay elected officials and LGBTQ+-owned businesses, and they don't reflect the policies coming from state government, Blackburn added. □



**Hundreds of people line Central Avenue and cheer during the 10th Annual St. Pete Pride Street Festival & Promenade in St. Petersburg, Fla. on June 30, 2012.**

**Associated Press**



## Pakistan authorities charge man with cyber terrorism over misinformation that sparked riots in U.K.

By BABAR DOGAR and BRIAN MELLEY

Associated Press

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP) —

Authorities in Pakistan on Wednesday arrested and charged a man with cyber terrorism for his alleged role in spreading misinformation that led to widespread rioting in the U.K. earlier this month.

The suspect was identified as freelance web developer Farhan Asif, 32, said Imran Kishwar, deputy inspector general of investigations in Lahore, the capital of eastern Punjab province.

The man is accused of spreading misinformation from YouTube and Facebook about the British teenage suspect in a stabbing attack that killed three girls and injured 10 other people July 29 at a dance class in Northwest England.

The false information claimed that the suspect was a recently arrived asylum-seeker and had a name that suggested he was Muslim.

After the misinformation led to a violent mob attacking a mosque near the site of the stabbing the next day, police took the unusual step of clarifying that the



Members of the public gather outside the Town Hall in Southport, England, Aug. 5, 2024, during a vigil for the victims of the stabbing attack last Monday.

Associated Press

suspect was born in the U.K. It's been widely reported in British media that his parents are from Rwanda and said to have Christian beliefs.

Channel3 Now, an account on the X social media platform that purports to be a news channel, was one of the first outlets to report the false name, Ali Al-Shakati. A Facebook account for the channel said

it is managed by people in Pakistan and the U.S.

The site's editor-in-chief posted an apology July 31 for "the misleading information published in a recent article on our website, Channel3 NOW. We deeply regret any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused."

But the false reports were widely disseminated and are blamed for fueling

more than a week of rioting that broke out across the United Kingdom and has led to more than 1,000 arrests. Authorities have blamed far-right agitators for stoking the violent unrest by continuing to spread misinformation and promoting the violent demonstrations online.

At a news conference in the eastern city of Lahore, the police official Kishwar

said Asif was arrested at his house in the city for questioning.

He said Asif has claimed that he was not the source of the misinformation but that he reposted it from social media. Kishwar said Asif ran the Channel3 Now account, and alleged that he spread fake news to gain more viewers and income. "He regretted over reposting fake news," Kishwar told The Associated Press. "This act on the part of Asif amounts to cyber terrorism for which he has been charged."

Kishwar added that Asif's arrest was a message for other YouTubers that they should verify facts before disseminating any information.

Police have handed over the case to the Federal Investigation Agency or FIA, which handles cases relating to the cyber terrorism. FIA said the misinformation shared by Asif "created a sense of fear, insecurity" in England, and added that it also harmed Pakistan's reputation. It was unclear if Britain had requested his extradition. There is no extradition treaty between Pakistan and the U.K. □

## The UAE accepts credentials of Taliban ambassador in a major diplomatic win for Afghanistan's rulers

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The United Arab Emirates on Wednesday accepted the credentials of the Taliban's ambassador to the oil-rich Gulf Arab state, the biggest diplomatic coup for Afghanistan's rulers who are not officially recognized as the country's legitimate government.

The development, the first Taliban ambassador since one was appointed to China last December, underscored the international divide over how to deal with the government now in Kabul. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul confirmed the news about Badruddin Haqqani in a post on the social media platform X.

The ministry did not respond to requests for information about Haqqani, who was previously the Taliban's envoy to the UAE.

Haqqani is not related to the Acting Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, who in June met the UAE leader, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, but he is from his team.

Sirajuddin Haqqani is the current leader of the powerful Haqqani network, a militant movement allied with the Taliban, and a designated global terrorist. He is wanted by the United States for his involvement in deadly attacks and is also on several sanctions lists. Even though the Taliban

remain isolated from the West, they have pursued bilateral ties with major regional powers. Last week, Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov arrived in Afghanistan in the highest-level visit by a foreign official since the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan three years ago.

The United Nations says that official recognition of the Taliban-run Afghanistan is "nearly impossible" while restrictions on women and girls are in place.

In a separate development Wednesday, a U.N.-appointed rights expert decried the Taliban's decision to bar him from Afghanistan. The special

rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan Richard Bennett has

frequently criticized the Taliban's treatment of women and girls. □



Afghan Taliban Envoy to the United Arab Emirates Badruddin Haqqani, far right, walks through an Emirates A380's business class on display at the Dubai Air Show in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Nov. 13, 2023.

Associated Press



# Congo reports more than 1,000 new mpox cases in a week. African authorities ask for vaccines

By **GERALD IMRAY**  
**Associated Press**

**CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP)** — Congo reported

more than 1,000 new mpox cases in the last week up to Tuesday as African health authorities asked for desperately needed vaccines to help fight its "growing" threat on the continent. The World Health Organization has declared the outbreaks in Africa a global emergency.

Mpox belongs to the same family of viruses as smallpox but causes milder symptoms like fever, chills and body aches, and mostly spreads through close skin-to-skin contact, including sexual intercourse. People with more serious cases can develop lesions on the face, hands, chest and genitals.

While mpox has been reported in 12 of Africa's 54 countries during these outbreaks, the vast central African nation of Congo has recorded by far the most cases this year. Out of a total of 18,910 cases in 2024, 94% — or 17,794 — were in Congo, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and



**A health worker attends to a mpox patient, at a treatment centre in Munigi, eastern Congo, Monday, Aug. 19, 2024.**

Prevention said, with 535 of the 541 deaths reported. The figures are likely an underestimate, as only about one in five suspected cases in Congo are being tested for mpox. Africa CDC director-general Dr. Jean Kaseya said many affected African countries had limited testing and surveillance capabilities. Over the last

seven days, Congo recorded 1,030 of the 1,405 new cases in Africa according to statistics provided late Tuesday by the Africa CDC. Only 16% of the cases have been confirmed by virus tests, but the infections meet the agency's definition of the disease.

The rising mpox case count in Africa and a new form

of the virus identified in Congo that might be more easily transmitted led the WHO to declare it a global health emergency last week. Some hope this will encourage donors to share vaccines and other help to curtail the outbreaks in Africa before cases spread internationally as Sweden recorded a case of the

**Associated Press**

new mpox variant first seen in eastern Congo.

The WHO has previously said its past efforts to raise donations for mpox failed to elicit even a single donor dollar.

Africa CDC's Kaseya said that his organization had received a pledge of 215,000 mpox vaccines from the European Union and the vaccine maker, Bavarian Nordic, which were due to arrive in the next few days. The United States' aid agency said it had donated 50,000 other doses of the same vaccine to Congo. Japan has also donated some doses to Congo.

But Africa likely needs much more. Congo's health minister said his country alone needed 3 million vaccine doses to end the outbreaks there, which have spilled into at least four nearby African countries.

A 2022 global mpox outbreak in more than 70 countries was shut down in the space of months with vaccines and treatments made available in rich nations, but hardly any doses reached Africa. □

# Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley calls for more international support for Taiwan

**TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)** — The former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, on Wednesday called for more international backing for Taiwan and a coordinated pushback against China's claims over

the self-ruled democracy. "The United States should elevate Taiwan on the world stage. You should no longer be silenced in global affairs," Haley told an audience at Ketagalan Forum, a Taipei conference

focused on security issues in the Asia-Pacific.

She called for Taiwan to become a full member of the U.N. even though it's being blocked by China from representation in international bodies. Beijing claims Taiwan as its own territory, to be brought under its control by force if necessary. China also prohibits countries it has international relations with from having formal ties with Taipei.

While the U.S. doesn't formally recognize Taiwan, it is the island's strongest backer and arms provider.

Haley, who served at the U.N. under former President Donald Trump's administration, ran a yearlong presidential campaign as a tough-on-China candi-

date before dropping out of the race in March. She has endorsed Trump in the November elections.

At the Taipei forum, she called on the U.S. and its Western allies to rally around Taiwan and "relentlessly push" for the island's global acceptance.

"If we take the necessary steps now, China will think twice before starting a war," she said.

Yoshihiko Noda, Japan's former prime minister who also addressed the forum, echoed Haley's calls for greater representation for Taiwan in international organizations.

He decried Taiwan's exclusion from the World Health Organization and said he was determined to push for its participation as an

observer, which China opposes.

Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te earlier accused China of economic coercion and military intimidation.

"China intends to change the rules-based international order," Lai said in a speech opening the forum. "That is why democratic countries must come together and take concrete action. Only by working together can we inhibit the expansion of authoritarianism."

Lai said China's military exercises in the Taiwan Strait as well as joint sea and air drills with Russia in the South China Sea, Western Pacific and Sea of Japan were intended to intimidate its neighbors. □



**Nikki Haley, former United States Ambassador to the United Nations, delivers a speech during the Ketagalan Forum in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2024.**

**Associated Press**



## Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished



**ST. CRUZ —** The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of ed-

ucational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

### Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The aforementioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get



an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fau-

na. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □



## Papiamentu words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamentu above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamentu you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamentu means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamentu word for tourists.

### Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamentu. At least, not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch



"hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamentu means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

### Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have dif-

ferent ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamentu is no different. Since Papiamentu is heavily influenced from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

1. Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.

2. Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

3. Bon nochi. You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word

"anochi".

### Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamentu. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

### Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much". □



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Once part of the famous Taste of Belgium restaurant, L'Avenue offers a new point of

view and brings a fresh life to what was once beloved by both locals and tourists. Crafted by Chef Juan Ludeña and his team, enjoy a superb variety of classic Belgian and French dishes served with a touch of innovation for lunch and dinner, including stews, steak-house quality meat and their famous Moules-frites, served with a variety of delicious and rich broth.



As if that wasn't enough, enjoy your meal under warm, stary lights accompanied by live music performances every day, seated either in a relaxing and cool interior area of the restaurant, or outside against a backdrop of the bright, colorful lights of the Palm Beach strip!

### More information

L'Avenue is situated at The Cove Mall in Palm Beach and is open every day from 11am to 10pm for lunch and dinner. To book a reservation or ask for more information, please contact their phone line at +297 6996400, send an e-mail [info@lavenuearuba.com](mailto:info@lavenuearuba.com), or visit their website at [lavenuearuba.com](http://lavenuearuba.com) □



## Best spots to view the sunset

(Oranjestad)—Today we celebrate Valentine's Day, and what can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset. Aruba's sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

### California Light House

Of course, being one of the highest point easily accessible to locals and tourists, the California Light House hill not only offers a tremendous

view of the sunset, but also a breath taking scenery of most of the island. In the distance you can spot all the hotels, the western shoreline and the wild waves that crash on the northern side of the island.

### Manchebo & Eagle Beach

Speaking of the western shoreline, the best spots for viewing the sunset on the beach has to be either Manchebo Beach or at Eagle Beach, which stretch along the entire western coast of the island starting from behind Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort up to the Amsterdam Manor

roundabout. The sunset on these beaches is truly breathtaking; the sky and ocean look so big and spacious, and paired with the orange/pink hue of the sunset, the white sandy beaches and the soft sounds of waves crashing—it can only be described as an experience!\*

### Arashi Beach

Another beach that has to be considered as another great spot to view the sunset. Arashi Beach is the last beach you will find along the western coast line, just before you drive up the hill to the Cali-

fornia Light House. A favorite for surfers and body boarders, the Arashi sky stretches out for miles, lending a spectacular canvas for the sun to create a masterpiece of orange, pink and purple hue.

### Hooiberg Hill

These last two options are for more active couples. If you and your partner like to hike, the Hooiberg Hill may be a great place for you to get your daily workout in and enjoy a beautiful view of the sunset and the island as a little reward. Climb on top the 587-step stairs and

reach the top to enjoy this incredible scenery.

### Casibari Rock Formation

If you're a rock climber, you might enjoy watching the sunset on top of the Casibari Rock Formation. It's no Yosemite, but it does offer a fun little exercise to get to the top. But if you prefer not to get your hands a little dirty, you can always use the stairs in the back.

Editor's note: This spot may be my personal favorite, if you couldn't already tell...□



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## Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the

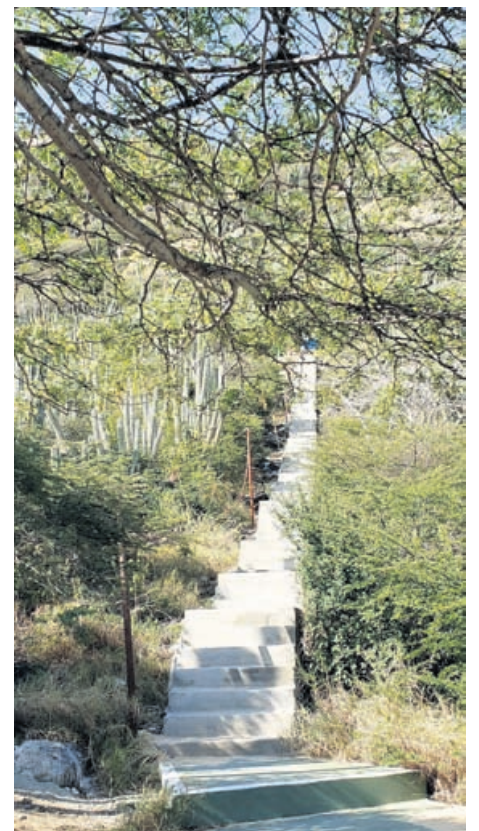
Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level

(or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □



## The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commis-

sioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started search-

ing for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd.



was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at

the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short life-span: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant.

Sources: Etnia Nativa & gold-mineranch.com.



## Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use

**(Oranjestad)—Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.**



### Pineapple

Pineapple has more uses than topping it on your Christmas ham. According to elders, the skin of a pineapple is great to use to refresh your body. Clean the skin thoroughly and make tea or warapa\* with it. It is said that this tea can also be drank after an operation on the ovaries or uterus. This gets rid of irritation and inflammation.

When the fruit is unripe and green, this can be used to stimulate menstruation flow in women. This also stimulates the passing kidney stones.

When ripe, the fruit can be used for poisoning in the gut and can help treat rheumatic diseases, like arthritis.

However, breastfeeding women who cannot produce much milk are advised not to consume too pineapple, and people with acid reflux are recommended to not consume any pineapple at all.



### Arrowroot

Arrowroot is native to tropical America and can be sold as a powder or whole. It is said that you can take arrowroot powder and make a "shal-up" (porridge) for stomach pain or when you're feeling weak. You can make it with milk too, but it is advised to best use just water. You can also add prunes for a bit of sweetness. Arrowroot shalup is also good to treat an unhealthy gut or for diarrhea.

To make arrowroot shalup, boil a bit of water and add one tablespoon of arrowroot powder and stir continuously until you reach porridge consistency. If you make a shalup with milk,

add a pinch of salt. Raw arrowroot powder can be used to powder babies.

### Eggplant/Aubergine

Eggplants, or aubergines, are easy to find in supermarkets around the world and can be grown all year round on the island. Related to potato and tomato, eggplants are good to calm nerves. It can also be used to lower blood pressure, by steeping its leaves in boiled water and drinking it. You can also make eggplant juice to help purify your blood. However, do make sure to drink slowly; let it mix with your spit and then swallow.

Eggplant kataplan\* can also be used to treat skin tumors, abscesses and hemorrhoids. Eggplant kataplan can also be used externally to treat arthritis. □

\*warapa: term referring to a water and sugar solution, a.k.a simple syrup.

\*kataplan: porridge-like mixture used externally for wounds or parts of the body that are painful or swollen.



## Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

**Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.**

With this series, we want to

take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

### Ayo

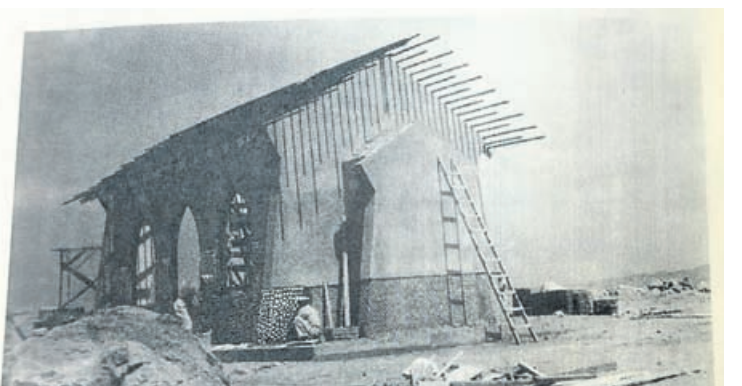
Ajo, or Ayo, is a word with Arawak-Indian origin. A (or Ha) is an Indo-Antillean generalizing word. If you were to change a part of the word

"Ayo", namely 'Yo', to 'Yu' and make 'Ayu', it would mean "white."

However, as we now know, the name of the neighborhood is 'Ayo'. The word 'Yo' stands for Yocahu, which is another word for 'creator' in Arawak/Taino and in the Papiamentu spoken today, 'Ayo' means 'bye'.

At Ayo, you can find some of the most well known rock formations. These formations became a well loved and visited attraction at Aruba that is held in high regards by both tourists and locals alike.

If you'd like to know more about the rock formations at Ayo, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all about its location and history.



This neighborhood's abbreviation is; A.

### Alto Vista

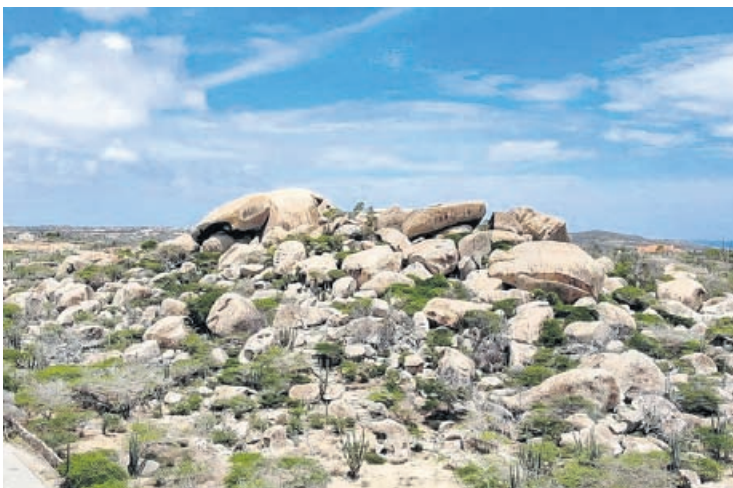
This word combination can be roughly translated to a 'high point of view' and the neighborhood received this name from the Hill.

In the surrounding areas, Domingo Antonia Silvestre built his by his own means the very first chapel or church of Aruba. The walls of this church

were made with rocks but the roof was made of dry corn stalks. The church was inaugurated by father Pablo Algemesi

If you'd like to know more about the Alto Vista Church's beautiful history, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all you need to know about it for when you visit it.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; AV.





# The Aruban Cunukero

## From past to present

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's culture consists of rich historical traditions that make up the Aruban identity and lifestyle. However, the life of the cunukero (farmer) is perhaps the most important aspect of our culture, in a sense representing to locals the true essence of the Aruban.

Historically, cunucus (farms) played a huge role in the early social and economic development of Aruba, and its relevance dates back to the early days of the colonization era. Upon being discovered by Spanish conquistadors in the late 15th century, Aruba was used primarily as a ranch, housing horses and cattle brought from Europe. During the Dutch colonization era where the West Indian Company (WIC) dominated the economic sphere on the island, using the land to set up cattle farms and ranches remained popular.

Anthropologist Sidney Mintz divided Caribbean farmers back in four categories:

1. The "squatters", who were mostly comprised of illegal and poor colonists, runaway slaves and deserters who took advantage of the Spanish's weak supervision on Caribbean islands like Cuba and the DR;
2. Then you have "Early Yeomen", who were legal farmers who came to the west under contract. Once their contract expired, they were given a plot of land for independent use;
3. Proto-Peasants were plantation slaves who were allowed to have a small piece of land to grow food for their own consumption. This was to curb the cost of living on the plantations;
4. Lastly you have the "Runaway Peasantries", usually comprised of runaway slaves who acquired farming tools and cattle through stealing or through secret exchanges with other slaves from different plantations.



However, the Aruban cunukeros back then are hard to place, and their history may explain why.

From 1636 (beginning of Dutch colonization era) to before the oil industry in 1924, Aruba's population consisted of mostly farmers. These farmers were mostly indigenous and were characterized as peasants. They weren't allowed to participate in trading, but instead were granted a piece of land to live off of. However, in exchange for this grant, these indigenous farmers were obligated to work for the WIC, doing daily tasks such as taking care of or hunting cattle—large majority of which were destined for Curacao, clean water tanks and chop wood, among other things.

As much as these farmers were given to opportunity to live "free" with a plot of land, their exclusion from the trading and business world, as well as being deprived the chance to become real property and cattle owners, made them

a unique group among Caribbean farmers at the time.

The WIC placed a lot of restrictions on these indigenous farmers—a method to safeguard their cattle deposit on the island. The indigenous farmers were mostly granted less than 7 acres of land. Those who owned bigger land were either once affiliated with the WIC or were colonists who settled on the island to try their luck at farming. In 1767, there were about 120 houses/cunucus on the island.

These Aruban farmers were also limited to the amount of cattle they could keep. Most kept goats as cattle, as only those who were affiliated with the WIC could keep (more) sheep. Of the 76 goat herders on the island, about 45 of them had less than 30 goats, and only 7 of them had more than 60 goats.

It wasn't until the WIC was defunct in late 18th century that these farmers

were able to obtain more freedom as cunukeros. After 1824, the government gave these farmers official permission to keep livestock, and the obligations once placed on them were officially discarded.

Because of the dry climate in Aruba, growing food for commercial purposes was not popular. The focus was mainly on cattle herding and taking care of livestock. However, livestock need food to survive, and when Aruba experienced its duper dry climate, many farmers would see a big loss in their livestock, and hence profit.

Although the WIC at one point did try to come up with an initiative to get more people to have land on the island, the climate never really allowed real profit from farming. Because of the climate, Aruban farmers in general could not keep large quantities of livestock. At a certain point toward the end of the 18th century, the climate got so bad that

many farmers decided to leave the island for a while.

For this reason, the farming economy on the island remained small. As the years went by and people noticed that these farms could not really produce any sustainable profit, farmers kept their small piece of land just to live off of. This is why the Aruban cunukeros only played a very tiny role into the plantation economy.

In modern Aruba, cunucus and cunukeros still exist on the island, fortunately with more freedom and more opportunity to tap into the agricultural market. These farmers usually sell their produce on a smaller scale, like during farmers' market events and other types of (holiday) events. □

**Source: "Arubaans Akkoord: Opstellen over Aruba van voor de komst van de olie-industrie (Aruban Accord: Essays on Aruba Before the Arrival of the Oil Industry)" by Alofs, Luc; Rutgers, Wim; Coomans, Henny E. red.**



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

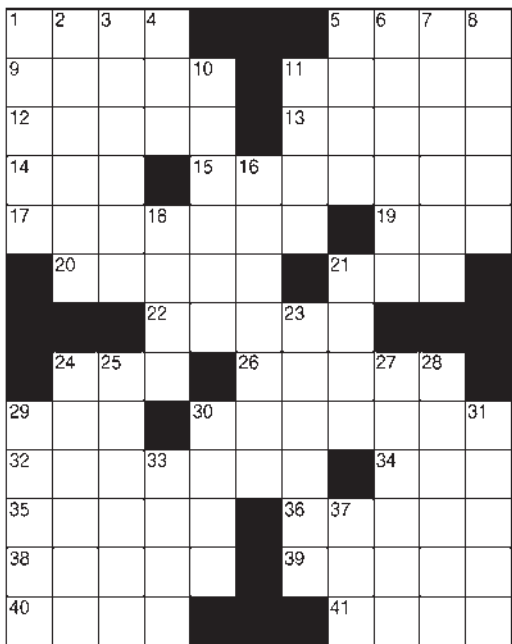
- ACROSS 39 Fixes, as holey  
1 Vend socks  
5 Surrealist Salvador  
9 Assert "Jurassic  
11 Type a Park"  
password, 41 Cuban  
say coin

- 12 Monk's place  
13 Laughable  
14 Neither follower  
15 Splash in drops  
17 Fly flattener  
19 Derby or boater  
20 Beer mug  
21 Simple card game  
22 Spook  
24 Small worker  
26 Sherpa's home  
29 Had lunch  
30 Go every direction  
32 Break into pieces  
34 Greek consonant  
35 Seoul setting  
36 Dubai rulers  
38 Abrasive powder

FUTURE IBEX  
INASEC NUKE  
RIGHT HANDED  
ERODE  
ZERO DEPP  
DINS AUDREY  
APT ASPIRE  
MURALS SECT  
PYRO SASH  
ENACT  
WRONGFOOTED  
HULA ARRIVE  
ONES REINER

Yesterday's answer

- DOWN 1 Looks over  
2 Arm joints  
3 Maze runner  
4 Golf position  
5 Warning word  
6 Christie of mysteries  
7 Straight  
8 Static  
10 Magical distant  
11 Teller of tales  
16 Act of remorse  
18 Final, e.g.  
21 Showed sorrow  
23 Brought up  
24 Comfort-able  
25 Less  
27 Dress  
28 Gets smart  
29 Inquired  
30 Order to Spot  
31 Rene of "Ransom"  
33 Ocean bird  
37 Travel aid



5-29

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-29

CRYPTOQUOTE

V NXSZ JD DZPXZYX HNZ  
MYCXS D R V Y C D R N X  
SXDLZYDJFJUJRG RNVR QZPXD  
HJRN NJD OSXXCZP. — FZF  
CGUVY

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: I'D RATHER REGRET THE RISKS THAT DIDN'T WORK OUT THAN THE CHANCES I DIDN'T TAKE AT ALL. — SIMONE BILES

Cruise ship Schedule: August 6 - 27 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	06	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL HORIZON CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS	08.00 09.00 13.00	20.00 22.00 23.00	B C I	1 1 1
WED	07	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	13	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL CELEBRATION CARNIVAL VISTA	08.00 08.00 13.00	21.00 22.00 23.00	B C I	1 1 1
THU	14	ENCHANTED PRINCESS	08.00	18.00	C	1
WED	20	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	27	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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## Edible or not? Alicia Silverstone's misstep shows how toxic lookalikes can fool you



This undated image provided by Bugwood.org shows toxic Jerusalem cherry fruits, which closely resemble cherry tomatoes.

Associated Press

By JESSICA DAMIANO  
Associated Press

Alicia Silverstone worried fans this week when she posted a TikTok clip of herself nibbling a poisonous berry she found along a sidewalk on a trip to England. The "Clueless" actor said she thought the fruit might have been a tomato, but realized it wasn't after a couple bites revealed an off-tasting, peppery flavor. That tomato lookalike seems to have been a Jerusalem cherry (*Solanum pseudo-capsicum*), which, along with actual tomatoes, egg-

plants, peppers, potatoes and tomatillos, is a member of the Solanaceae, or nightshade, family. Although the fruits (and potato tuber) of those crops are safe to eat, their foliage can be toxic. If you aren't 100% sure that something is food, please don't put it into your mouth. About those Jerusalem cherries...

All parts of Jerusalem cherry, which is sold as a houseplant, are poisonous not only to humans but also to dogs, cats and horses, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The plant's unripe berries can be especially dangerous, causing central nervous system and gastrointestinal symptoms, including delirium, abdominal pain, fever, vomiting, paralysis and more.

Consuming large amounts can be fatal. Silverstone was lucky because, she says, she didn't swallow the berries, and also perhaps because the berries were reddish-orange, which indicates they were ripe. □

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2 BR 2 bath oean view \$12 K  
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**House for sale**  
Washington Noord  
5 min drive to Palm beach and eagle beach  
4 BR 4 Bath with and apartment  
Price : \$ 500,000  
Call : 011-297-630-1307  
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**House for sale**  
Cumana Near C Mart  
10 min drive to Nikki Beach , eagle beach and palm beach  
2 BR 3 bath with a studio apartment and pool  
Price : \$450,000  
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johnnypaesch@gmail.com



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# Jason Schwartzman and Carol Kane forge an unlikely friendship in 'Between the Temples'

By **LINDSEY BAHR**  
AP Film Writer

Carol Kane's name came to filmmaker Nathan Silver in a fever dream.

He'd come down with a case of COVID-19 while trying to get his new film together. The story he and co-writer C. Mason Wells envisioned was about an unlikely friendship between a recently widowed cantor in a depressive funk and an older woman, his former grade school music teacher, who wants to study for a bat mitzvah.

Ben, the cantor who can no longer sing, would be Jason Schwartzman. Carla, who was based on the filmmaker's own mother, was more of an enigma. And then came a fit of inspiration in that fateful, feverish sleep. "Everyone was like, 'of course it's her,'" Silver said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. Though the two actors had never worked together before ("In my mind we had," Kane laughed), they had an immediate rapport and comfort with one another transcending even the awkward stillness of a group Zoom session. And that was when he knew they really had a movie.

"I had such a feeling about Jason," said Kane. "We had such a trust in each other. Lord knows why, but



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Jason Schwartzman, left, and Carol Kane in a scene from "Between the Temples."

we did. That made it possible. It made it, dare I say, almost easy because it was sort of natural to talk to each other."

"Between the Temples" opens in theaters this week. A breakout from this year's Sundance Film Festival, Sony Pictures Classics swooped in to acquire the distribution rights after it received near-universal praise for its performances and its unique tone and style: A screwball comedy with a 1970s vibe, that's wry and life-affirming, about two lost souls who find one

another at the perfect time, over mudslides at the local bar.

Focusing their lives in and around Judaism allowed Silver to embrace the beauty of the question.

"I feel like these characters are questioning everything in their lives," Silver said. "It's about celebrating that idea that you're not taking the reality that you're handed as the reality you need to live. I think that no matter how despairing things are in your life or in the world, you have to have this faith in the absurd, that there is

some brightness in the future."

In that spirit, "Between the Temples" is also not easily categorizable as a May-December romance everyone wanted to keep that line a little blurry. But it is, Silver said, "a May-December connection." That reminded Schwartzman of something his mother said to him about a breakup years ago.

"She said, 'sometimes we can meet someone, and they may not be right for us, but they walk us down the aisle to the next person,

who is,'" Schwartzman said. "These people are moment to moment, and they are walking each other to this next door, and they could go through it together. They could not.

Whatever. But it's like it's just this moment where they are each other's escorts, and it's essential that they are."

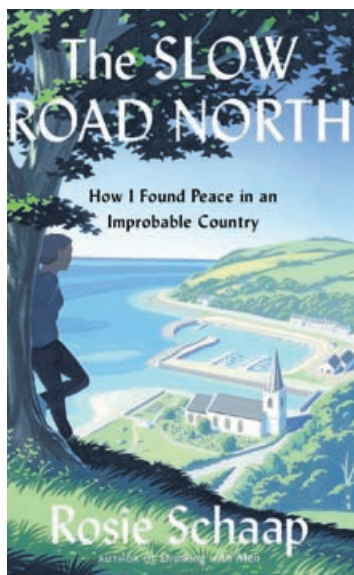
Although it's set in a kind of bleak-looking small town in the dead of winter, Silver wanted the movie to evoke Carla's spirit.

"HD is inherently cold. Film is warm and alive," Silver said.

"We wanted it to have that warmth, her sensibility to take over the film, for it to feel like her because she's bringing this warmth to this very cold present, this depression that Jason's character is going through."

Silver's references are vast and deep: 1970s soviet filmmakers like Kira Muratova and Larisa Shepitko, the folk singer Sibylle Baier, and everything from Howard Hawks' "Bringing Up Baby" to Maren Ade's "Toni Erdmann" helped inform various aspects of "Between the Temples." One that proved especially useful to Schwartzman was David Berman, the late poet and indie rock musician of the Silver Jews and the Purple Mountains, known for his brilliant lyrics. □

Associated Press



This cover image released by Mariner Books shows "The Slow Road North: How I Found Peace in an Improbable Country" by Rosie Schaap.

Associated Press

## Book Review: In 'The Slow Road North,' a New York writer finds solace in a Northern Irish town

By **MAE ANDERSON**  
The Associated Press

Can what looks like running away from grief and sadness actually be a way to heal?

In "The Slow Road North," writer Rosie Schaap chronicles her circuitous route from spending most of her life as a dyed-in-the-wool New Yorker to finding herself settling down far away in a small town in Northern Ireland.

Schaap, an established journalist, teacher and occasional bartender in Brooklyn with a cozy apartment she'd lived in for decades, seemed set as a New York lifer.

But she is dealt a crushing loss when her husband dies of cancer in 2010, leaving her a widow at 39. A little more than a year later, her mother, with whom she had a complicated relationship, dies, too. Faced with conflicted feelings that she isn't dealing with her grief in the "right" way, she begins to ache for change.

Schapp has a longtime fascination with Ireland and its poets, writers and history, and after returning there over

several years, she decides to attend a creative writing program in Belfast in 2019. She soon settles in Glenarm, a coastal town north of Belfast.

Facing loads of skepticism from her friends wondering why she would give up her perfect Brooklyn apartment, from Irish neighbors wondering why an American would move to Glenarm, and even her own fear that she might be running away from her problems, Schaap dedicates herself to becoming involved with Glenarm's community. She finds solace in the people, the countryside, and establishes her place among new friends. She even embarks on a new love.

Peppering her own story with snippets of Irish poetry, folktales, colorful descriptions of small-town characters, and the history of Irish travesties like the potato famine of the 1800s and the later decades of the sectarian conflict known as The Troubles, Schaap's memoir details how Glenarm and Northern Ireland's nuanced relationship with grief helps her face her own. □



# Banged-up Braves scrambling to put together a lineup after an unrelenting series of injuries

By PAUL NEWBERRY

AP Sports Writer

**ATLANTA (AP)** — In sports, there's a mantra that everyone falls back on when the inevitable injuries strike. Next man up.

Only one problem for the Atlanta Braves.

"We're having a hard time finding the next man up," manager Brian Snitker moaned. An unrelenting series of breaks, tears and strains have left the six-time reigning NL champions scrambling to cobble together a lineup, putting their hopes of making it back to the postseason in serious jeopardy. "We're just going through a really weird time right now," All-Star pitcher Reynaldo López said through a translator. "It just feels like as soon as someone comes off the IL, someone goes on it. Then someone else comes off and someone else goes on. It's just really strange, but there's nothing we can do." Slugging third baseman Austin Riley was the latest to go down, his year in jeopardy after getting plunked with a 97 mph fastball. He'll need six to eight weeks to recover from a fractured right hand, which knocks him out for at least the rest of the regular season. He's hardly the first to suffer such a fate: NL MVP Ronald Acuña Jr.



Pittsburgh Pirates starting pitcher Martín Pérez (54) checks on Atlanta Braves' Ronald Acuña Jr., who injured himself running the bases during the first inning of a baseball game against the Pittsburgh Pirates in Pittsburgh, Sunday, May 26, 2024.

sustained a season-ending knee injury in late May, one year after becoming the first 40-70 player (40 homers, 70 stolen bases) in big league history. Ace pitcher Spencer Strider, coming off a franchise record for strikeouts in 2023, made it through only two starts this season before a torn elbow ligament ended his campaign.

Second baseman Ozzie Albies has been sidelined since July 21 after breaking his left wrist while catching a throw on a stolen base. If his

recovery goes well, he might be able to return for the final days of the regular season. Center fielder Michael Harris II missed two months with a left hamstring injury.

Key reliever A.J. Minter is done for the season after undergoing surgery for a lingering hip ailment.

Catcher Sean Murphy, an All Star in 2023, was sidelined for nearly two months after a swing on opening day left him with a strained left oblique muscle.

Max Fried, another key

member of the rotation, spent more than three weeks on the injured list with an inflamed nerve in his left forearm. Now, add Riley to the list.

"The guys that we're losing, you can't just go out and replace them," Snitker said. "You've gotta hope you can keep fighting and keep your head above water until you get them back. Unfortunately, a lot of these guys we're not getting back."

For the opener of a crucial three-game series against

the first-place Philadelphia Phillies, the Braves sent out a lineup that included three players who've been cut by other teams this season.

Whit Merrifield, released by the Phillies in July, started at second base. Ramón Laureano, let go by the Cleveland Guardians in May, held down right field. Gio Urshela got the nod at third base, a mere two days after he was cast aside by the Detroit Tigers. All three contributed to a 3-1 victory, undoubtedly using their rejections as motivation. Merrifield tripled, doubled and scored Atlanta's first run. Urshela walked with the bases-loaded in the eighth inning to drive in an insurance run.

Laureano made two sliding catches in the ninth to seal the victory.

"You just play the best you can every night and a lot of times it's not your night," Merrifield aid. "But to contribute and play well against a team that told you that you weren't good enough to play for them, it feels good. I'd be lying if I said it didn't." In a twist on the injury storyline, López threw five strong innings with 10 strikeouts Tuesday night in his first appearance in more than three weeks. He had been on the injured list with a strained right forearm. □

Associated Press

## U.S. grouped with Mexico, Italy and Britain at Houston in 1st round of 2026 World Baseball Classic

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The United States will face Mexico, Italy and Britain in Group B of the first round of the 2026 World Baseball Classic, which be based at Houston's Minute Maid Park, Major League Baseball and the players' association said Wednesday.

Puerto Rico will play Cuba, Panama and Canada in Group A at San Juan's Hiram Bithorn Stadium.

Defending champion Japan will meet Australia, South Korea and the Czech Republic in Group C at the Tokyo Dome from March 5-10.

The Dominican Republic will face Venezuela, the Netherlands and Israel in Group D at Miami's loan Depot park.

Each five-nation group also will include a nation that emerges from qualifying, which will be held in February and March 2025. The Tokyo group will run from March 5-10, with the others from March 6-11.

The top two teams in each group advance to quarterfinals on March 13 and 14, with teams from Groups A and B playing in Houston and nations

emerging from Groups C and D meeting in Miami. The semifinals will be March 15 and 16 at Miami, which will be the site of the final on March 17.

Japan beat the United States 3-2 for the 2023 title at Miami as Shohei Ohtani struck out Mike Trout to end the game. Japan also won titles in 2006 and 2009, while the Dominican Republic won in 2013 and the U.S. in 2017. Houston is hosting games for the first time and San Juan for the first time since 2013. Tokyo has hosted pools in all five previous editions. □



Japan player Shohei Ohtani (16) celebrates with his teammates after defeating the United States in the World Baseball Classic championship game, Tuesday, March 21, 2023, in Miami.

Associated Press



# Nelly Korda looks to rediscover unbeatable form in Women's British Open at the home of golf

**ST. ANDREWS, Scotland (AP)** — Nelly Korda was playing such good golf in the first half of 2024 that her rivals were starting to hope she wouldn't turn up for tournaments.

"I played in LA a couple weeks ago and she pulled out," No. 40 Georgia Hall said of the world's top-ranked player.

"I texted her and just said, 'Thanks for giving us a chance.'"

One of the greatest winning streaks in the history of women's golf sure has come to end, however, heading into this week's British Open the fifth and final major of the year.

After a run of five straight victories from January to



Nelly Korda, of the United States, hits her shot from the 14th tee during the third round of the women's golf event at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Friday, Aug. 9, 2024, at Le Golf National, in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, France.

Associated Press

April amid a tear of six wins in seven starts on the LPGA Tour, Korda missed the cut in three successive events including in two majors for the first time in her career and was outside the top 20 at both the Evian Championship and the Olympic Games in Paris.

So, where does Korda see her game heading to the home of golf at St. Andrews, which is staging the Women's Open for the third time?

"You're going to go up. You're going to go down," Korda said Wednesday. "I think the best part of the downs is that you learn so much about yourself and it's always a learning opportunity and I enjoy that. "I always try to think of everything in a positive mindset.

Compared to the start of the year, obviously I've had some finishes that weren't the best.

But at the end of the day, I'm still learning and I'm still getting better from it."

For Korda at this stage of her career, it's about "not getting ahead of yourself." That will apply to this week, too.

The Old Course should provide a stern test for the best players in the world because of the rain and strong winds potentially more than 30 mph that have been forecast for Thursday and Friday.

Stacy Lewis, the American who won the event the last time it was held at St. Andrews in 2013, said Wednesday she reckons "maybe 60% of the field" will start off the week with the kind of mindset that will prevent them from winning.

"There's a lot of people," Lewis, the captain of the United States' Solheim Cup team, said, "when they get off the plane and they see the weather, it's not going to fit them."

Korda, whose only top-10 finish in seven British Opens was a tie for ninth in 2019, said it was important to "stay present." □



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